

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

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R 160950Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2410

INFO AMCONSUL UDORN

AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI

CINCPAC

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

USLO PEKING

DIA

UNCLAS BANGKOK 6109

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, TH

SUBJ: THANAT KHOMAN'S PRESS CONFERENCE

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

THE RECENTLY APPOINTED FOREIGN AFFAIRS ADVISER TO THE PRIME MINISTER, THANAT KHOMAN, GAVE A PRESS CONFERENCE APRIL 11. FOLLOWING IS AN UNOFFICIAL USIS TRANSLATION OF HIS COMMENTS. WORTH NOTING ARE HIS REMARKS ON THE REPATRIATION OF VIETNAMESE REFUGEES; THE U.S. PRESENCE ON THAI BASES; AND THE FOREIGN RELATIONS PRIORITY HE ASSIGNS TO CHINA (PRC).

REPORTER: A REPORT THIS MORNING STATES CHINA HAS SHOWN A REACTION TOWARD US BY BANNING THAI TOURISTS FROM ENTERING THE COUNTRY.

THANAT: I AM BY NO MEANS CERTAIN THAT THAT REPORT IS TRUE. IT MIGHT BE THE SPREADING OF RUMORS IN ORDER
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TO URGE THE GOVERNMENT TO SPEED UP TAKING ACTION THAT

WOULD LACK THOROUGHNESS. IT MIGHT BE A WAY TO PUT PRESSURE ON THE GOVERNMENT BUT THIS METHOD IS MOST PROBABLY NOT TAKEN BY THAT COUNTRY. I HOWEVER DO NOT KNOW WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR IT.

REPORTER: WILL THE COMMITTEE CONTINUE ITS STUDY OF THE SUITABILITY TO ABOLISH ORDER NO. 53 OF THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY? IF ITS STUDY IS FINISHED WILL IT REPORT ITS VIEW TO THE NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY?

THANAT: WE ARE A COMMITTEE OF THE NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY AND WE ARE GIVEN ORDERS BY IT. A SECOND MEETING WILL BE HELD NEXT THURSDAY.

REPORTER: HAS THIS COMMITTEE STUDIED IT FROM A POLITICAL ANGLE YET?

THANAT: IT IS BEING STUDIED ESPECIALLY FROM A POLITICAL ANGLE. MAJORITY VIEW IS THAT IT WOULD OBTAIN GOOD RESULTS POLITICALLY SHOULD UNDERSTANDING BE REACHED AND CONTACTS MADE. IT SHOULD OBTAIN GOOD RESULTS IN REGARD TO TRADE ALSO. THE POLITICAL ANGLE IN THIS CASE MEANS THE TROUBLE IN BORDER AREAS AND IN OTHER MATTERS ALSO. WE HAVE BROUGHT UP VIEWS EXPRESSED BY SOME MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR CONSIDERATION ALSO BECAUSE WE ARE ENDEAVORING TO CARRY OUT THIS TASK AS THOROUGHLY AND CAREFULLY AS POSSIBLE.

REPORTER: HAS THE PROPER TIME BEEN REACHED YET TO CONTACT NORTH VIETNAM AND NORTH KOREA?

THANAT:IT IS MOST DIFFICULT TO BE OF THE SAME VIEW OR TO REACH AGREEMENT ON ANY SUBJECT, EVEN ON THE REPATRIATION OF VIETNAMESE DISPLACED PERSONS, NOT GOING AS FAR AS POLITICS AND OTHER MATERS. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE ATTITUDE OF THE OTHER SIDE INDICATES THAT UNDERSTANDING COULD BE REACHED THROUGH TALKS. THERE ARE PLENTY OF WAYS THROUGH WHICH TO MAKE CONTACT. I MYSELF KNOW THAT MAKING CONTACT IS NOT DIFFICULT, BUT AFTER MAKING CONTACT THE QUESTION IS WHETHER RESULTS OBTAINED WILL BE TO A SUITABLE

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EXTENT, OF VERY LITTLE, OR NOT AT ALL.

REPORTER: DO THEY REFUSE TO COME AND NEGOTIATE WITH US?

THANAT: NOT AHT, BUT THEY WANT THEIR CONDITIONS TO BE AGREED TO 100 PERCENT, A DEMAND WHICH WE CANNOT APPROVE OF.

REPORTER: WHAT CONDITIONS ARE THERE THEY WANT US

TO AGREE TO 100 PERCENT?

THANAT: THERE ARE SEVERAL CONDITIONS. THEY WANT US TO PROCLAIM A POLICY THAT IS FULLY NEUTRAL, FOR AMERICAN AND FOREIGN FORCES TO BE COMPLETELY WITHDRAWN, AND TO FORBID THESE FOREIGN FORCES TO BE STATIONED IN AND USE BASES IN THAILAND. THESE ARE THE MAIN CONDITIONS DEMANDED, AND THERE ARE STILL OTHER CONDITIONS ALSO. THEY DO NOT WANT TO ACCEPT VIETNAMESE REFUGEES. THE VIETNAMESE THEMSELVES DO NOT WANT TO BE REPATRIATED; ONLY A MINORITY WANT TO RETURN HOME BUT THE MAJORITY TO NOT WANT TO GO HOME.

REPORTER: IS THE MAIN OBSTACLE RESPONSIBLE FOR NORTH VIETNAM'S ATTITUDE BECAUSE WE HAVE EXTENDED RECOGNITION TO SOUTH VIETNAM?

THANAT: THAT IS OLD HISTORY AND OF NOT MUCH IMPORTANCE. I UNDERSTAND THAT THE MAIN CONDITION THEY DEMAND NOW IS FOR FOREIGN FORCES TO BE COMPLETELY WITHDRAWN FROM THAILAND AND FOR NO FOREIGN FORCES TO USE BASES IN THAILAND. FOR INSTANCE, THEY WANT THE THAI GOVERNMENT TO PROCLAIM THAT IT WILL NOT ALLOW THESE FOREIGN FORCES TO USE THAI BASES, OR NOT ALLOW THEM TO CARRY ON ANY ACTIVITIES OR MISSIONS FROM THESE BASES. I FEEL THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS NOT READY TO AGREE TO SUCH A DEMAND YET. ALL THIS CONCERNS DEMANDS MADE BY NORTH VIETNAM. WE HAVE NO PROBLEM AT ALL WITH NORTH KOREA, WHICH IS AT A VERY GREAT DISTANCE FROM OUR COUNTRY.

REPORTER: IN REGARD TO RELATIONS BETWEEN THAILAND AND CHINA, HAS THE COMMITTEE TAKEN UP FOR CONSIDERATION THE SUITABILITY TO SET UP POLITICAL CONTACTS, IN ADDITION TO TRADE CONTACTS?

THANAT: CONTACTS MUST BE STARTED WITH TRADE FIRST,
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AND I BELIEVE THAT THAT IS WHAT THE GOVERNMENT WANTS. POLITICS MUST BE STARTED AT A LATER STAGE. ONCE TRADE CONTACTS ARE SET UP AND ARE EXPANDED STEADILY, POLITICAL CONTACTS SHOULD FOLLOW AUTOMATICALLY. IN MEETINGS THAT ARE HELD AT PRESENT THERE ARE SOME MATTERS CONCERNING POLITICS TO SOME EXTENT ALSO.

REPORTER: HAS THE PRIME MINISTER ENTRUSTED YOU WITH CONSIDERATION OF MAKING CONTACT WITH OTHER SOCIALIST COUNTRIES?

THANAT: THERE IS NO PROBLEM REGARDING OTHER COUNTRIES AT PRESENT. THE PROBLEMS FACED CONCERN NORTH VIETNAM AND CHINA AND PRIORITY MUST BE GIVEN TO CHINA, NORTH VIETNAM COMING AFTER IT. IT IS BECAUSE BOTH THOSE COUNTRIES ARE CONCERNED WITH PROBLEMS IN OUR BORDER AREAS.

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